



PLUS Small Grants Program

Parent Leaders United for Students (PLUS) is an innovative pilot dedicated to advance -

- **The Voice of Parents**– equipping parents and community leaders with knowledge and skills to understand, promote and support positive change within neighborhood schools,
- **The Engagement of Parents**– supporting parents as learners, leaders and catalysts for sustainable and positive change on behalf of their children,
- **The Accountability of Parents** – helping parents to understand the opportunities and expectations for parent-to-parent and parent-to-school-relationships.

Grant Purpose

Where commitment is high but resources are few, PLUS Grants can help parents transform ideas and energy into efforts and actions that build relationships, change communities, develop leadership, and stimulate lasting results. PLUS Grants provide funding to help create solutions by building on community strengths and assets.

Grant Requests

PLUS Grants requests must be for efforts that involve planning, implementing and/or expanding the voice of parents, the engagement of parents and the accountability of parents in education-related activities. These may occur in a community or school-based setting. Examples of projects or activities include, but are not limited to:

- Events (trainings, forums, festivals) to stimulate conversation and collaboration between the school and community.
- Communications tools (Facebook, newsletters) to inform community parents of education information and actions (i.e. APS curriculum, cluster activity, state reform).
- Activities to engage parents, students and communities (joint projects, academic or mentoring programs).

All proposed PLUS projects should employ and build on the strengths and assets already existing in the community, including volunteer skills and labor, public spaces, institutions, businesses, or churches.

PLUS grants may be used for items such as consultants (with a clear and compelling scope of work), food, materials, space rental, entertainment, equipment, honorariums.

Steps for Applying for a PLUS Grant

- Complete an online form found at <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/2723794/PLUSGrantApplication> to apply.
- Be sure to have an affiliated business bank account or a fiscal agent with a bank account. **Note:** If using a fiscal agent, no more than 2% of the total grant can be used for fiscal agent fees.
- Demonstrate that all relevant stakeholders are involved and informed about the application and what you are proposing to do with the funding, particularly school principal(s), Local Governance Team members (GO Team) (if available), and all other parents and partners involved.
- Develop a thorough budget.

About PLUS Grants

- Grants will range between \$250 and \$1,000 per application.
- Grants are awarded for a 3-month period; groups must be able to successfully complete their proposed project in three months
- All grantees must submit an end of grant report.
- Grant applications will be accepted anytime between April 2016 and February 2017. There is no application deadline. In most cases, grants will be awarded between 14-21 days after receipt of application.
- Parent engagement activities in a cluster can be supported multiple times through multiple applicants (i.e. parent-led group, school, cluster, Go-Team, etc.).
- No grantee will receive more than two grants per school year.
- If awarded a grant, parents leading the efforts of the grant must agree to attend a minimum of one PLUS Academy session.

Who is eligible for PLUS grants?

PLUS Grants program defines a parent as "a person or persons providing legal guardianship to a child currently attending an Atlanta Public School (K-12).

PLUS grants are available for **parent-led groups, nonprofit organizations, individual schools** and **school clusters** that support parent engagement, involvement, and action in Atlanta Public School district. Priority will be given to efforts that support:

1. Parent Action Groups (PAG) at Boyd and Tuskegee Airmen Global Academy (former Connelly) Elementary Schools
2. Activities in the Washington, Carver, or Douglass Clusters- *Parent-led efforts and those that include graduates or participants from the PLUS Academy will receive preference.*
3. Atlanta Public Schools Governance Teams (GO Teams City-wide) – *Parent-led efforts and those that include graduates or participants from the PLUS Academy will receive preference.*
4. Atlanta Public Schools that are on the list of Georgia Public School's Earning less than 60 on CCRPI for Previous Three Years (2012-2014)

While the above-mentioned are priorities, other grant applications are welcome and will be evaluated objectively.

NOTE: Schools without a 501(c)3 are eligible to apply for PLUS grants using the Atlanta Partners for Education as its fiscal agent. Atlanta Partners for Education is a 501(c)3 organization that was founded in 1981 to provide a vehicle for the active participation of Atlanta-area businesses, and the larger community, in supporting the Atlanta Public School System (APS). Atlanta Partners for Education is housed in the Metro Atlanta Chamber (MAC). PLUS staff will help to bridge this relationship.

Who is not eligible for PLUS grants?

- Parent-led groups supporting private schools/students
- Charter Schools that are not in the Atlanta Public School System
- Individuals or for-profit businesses
- Political groups
- Nonprofit or community-based organization that do not have active parent leadership involved in the request

PLUS grant Community Coaching

Community Coaching will be provided to help all PLUS grantees complete and document progress. Staff, volunteers and/or paid consultants will work with grantees to set project goals, evaluate community assets, help manage community outreach and organizing and complete required project reports.

Mandatory Workshops

Parents leading the grant's activities must attend at least one PLUS Academy 101 workshop. Schools that are grant recipients must ensure that at least three parents attend one PLUS 101 level workshop. Curriculum, course dates and location will be agreed upon in the PLUS grant agreement. If a workshop is not offered during the grant period, alternative arrangements will be made. Grantees will provide a report on the results achieved in the grant's final report.

Completing Your Application Budget

Proposals that show evidence of carefully prepared and accurate budgets are most likely to receive all or a majority of the amount requested. Detailed budgets help us to see how the amount requested is critical to the success of the project. **It is thus extremely important that you prepare an accurate and well-prepared budget.**

Your application will also be stronger if you are not relying on the grant to fund the entire project or activity. One of the PLUS initiative goals is to help parents identify assets and resources in their communities that can be used to accomplish their projects. PLUS grants are one resource, but volunteer labor, contributions from local businesses and churches, donated food and materials, etc. are also important resources. These resources can be cash or "in-kind." Try to think creatively about how you can find neighborhood assets and put them to work in your project. All additional resources that you plan to use in your project should be included in your budget.

When you are preparing your budget, please include all budget items into the categories listed on the budget page. This will make things consistent when you prepare your reports. If you have questions about which category to use for a certain expense, you may email us at PLUS@cfgreateratlanta.org or use your best judgment.

The budget section of the application has three goals: (1) to help you submit reasonably accurate estimates of the cost of your project; (2) to get a complete picture of the resources you will need from PLUS to complete your project; and (3) to see what other community resources and assets you will be using. If you have questions, please email us and we will quickly respond.

Next Steps

Once your application is received, the PLUS team will review the application and contact you via email if necessary with any questions. Please check your email regularly to learn your application's status. The process is expected to be between 14-21 days.

You will be notified of the grant status via email. If you receive an award, the Community Foundation will connect you to your Community Coach. The Coach will contact you to schedule an orientation session, complete and sign the agreement and give you the grant check. Once projects are completed, groups also submit an End of Project Report with original receipts. Groups failing to submit these reports WILL NOT be considered for future grants.

Thank you for your commitment to parents and students! Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions at PLUS@cfgreateratlanta.org.